



NEWS RELEASE

SCC professor and friends discuss letter-writing collection during COVID-19 pandemic shutdown

ORANGE, Calif. – People around the world found creative methods of expressions and socialization amid the period of mandatory shutdown and isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

While some leaned further into technology to find connectivity and expression, Santiago Canyon College Associate Professor of English Ryan Murphy and two of his friends did something less technical.

Murphy, Chris Hoke and Nicholas Webber – friends from childhood – exchanged letters during the pandemic through a shared Google Doc.

Looking back at their correspondence, the friends decided to share their experience with the world. On October 26, the friends met at Santiago Canyon College and discussed what became known as The Future Forest.

“The more we talked about it, the more we realized the things that were good for us during the pandemic were good for us now,” Murphy said.

The group uploaded the letters to a website that releases the letters on the corresponding date it was originally written.

“The experience of seeing it (unfold) is like the experience of reading something new,” Murphy said. “There’s nothing like this in literary nonfiction.”

The trio explained their thoughts behind the letter-writing, how it started and why they decided to share their correspondence.

“It became something we didn’t expect,” Murphy said. “When we began telling others about what we did in 2020, they were interested in seeing it.”

In addition to letting the world see the writings of three friends, Murphy saw an educational value to sharing the letters. The discussion on October 26, was titled “Letter Writing in the Time of COVID: How the Humanities Saved Us and Can Save You Too!”

“This is also an appeal for the Humanities,” Murphy said. “There’s a goodness in letter writing.”

To learn more about The Future Forest, visit, <https://www.futureforestletters.com/>.

To learn more about SCC, visit sccollege.edu/. Questions about this press release can be directed to Eugene W. Fields, public information officer at fields_eugene@sccollege.edu or 714.628.5936.

###

About Santiago Canyon College

Santiago Canyon College (SCC) is designated as a Hispanic-Serving Institution and is one of two colleges in the [Rancho Santiago Community College District](#), serving approximately 17,000 students annually. Accredited in 2000, this dynamic and award-winning institution is located in the city of Orange and provides an array of educational opportunities to more than 195,000 residents comprising the community. SCC offers 221 degree and certificate programs (including 28 associate degrees for transfer). SCC has been ranked among the “50 Best Community Colleges” in the U.S. by College Choice, recognized multiple times by The Chronicle of Higher Education as one of “The Great Colleges to Work For,” received Gold-level status as a Military Friendly School®, and boasts award-winning, dedicated faculty, high-quality and student-centered education, and has an excellent university transfer rate supported by transfer-guarantee programs.